A

SERMON

PREACHED AT

WHITE's-ALLEY,

ON

SUNDAY, *October* 31, 1742.

On OCCASION of the DEATH of the late REVEREND

Mr. *JOHN ASHWORTH.*

By JAMES FOSTER.

LONDON:

Printed for J. NOON, at the *White-Hart*, in *Cheap-side*; J. GRAY, at the *Groſs-Keys*, in the *Poultry*; and A. MILLAR, at *Buchanan's-Head*, in the *Strand*. 1742.

W. Musgrave.

BRITISH MUSEUM

ISAIAH xl. 6.

----All fleſh is *graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof* is *as the flower of the field.*

THERE are only three ways of thinking upon death, and the unavoidable eclipſe and decay of all human glory, excellence, and felicity, and they are theſe; with *terror*, *indifference*, or *uſe*. To think of this determined criſis and period of all mortal elegance and pleaſure with *terror* is fruitleſs and unavailing, becauſe the eſtabliſhed laws of nature will take their courſe—It argues a weak mind too much captivated and enſlaved by paſſion, and in which the voice of reaſon, and the dictates of religion, are not allowed their due weight and influence—It ſpreads an habitual ſul-

len gloom within, which aggravates misfortunes, and renders the real comforts of life insipid—It enervates resolution, damps activity, prevents our consulting, and attending regularly, to our own advantage, and chearfully pursuing the good of others; and, of consequence, renders us a torment to ourselves, and an affliction and burden to our friends around us. On the other hand, to think of these things with *indifference* is the sure mark of a stupid insensible temper, on which the most solemn and important events can make no impression. For even on the *dull* sceptical scheme, which degrades the nature and rank of man into that of *a mere animal*, all the little happiness, which we can either enjoy or hope for, must sink and vanish at death: But if there be a a future state of immortality, our risk upon changing our post, and shifting the scene of being, must be infinite. The terrifying views of death are not, therefore, more *pusilanimous* and *distracting*, than an unconcerned and careless frame is *rash* and *trifling*: The first implies too

quick

quick and *deep* a ſenſe, the latter that we are either ſo giddy, or ſo hardened, as to have *no* inward feeling; the one ſuppoſes *no ſtrength*, the other *no exerciſe at all* of reaſon. But if we make the juſt improvement of the frailty, and vanity, and infinite uncertainty of human life in every condition, however elate and ſplendid, fluſhed with health, crowned with plenty, decorated with honours, admired and envied by the ſuperficial thinker, or more fitly beloved and reſpected for the amiable qualities which adorn it; we then act a diſcreet and *manly* part, more properly in our ſphere, and in concert with the deſign of infinite wiſdom; we take the moſt effectual method to arm ourſelves againſt the inexorable rigour of our fate, and check all exorbitant inclinations.

The moſt uſeful reflections of mankind are thoſe which are employed about the *plaineſt* ſubjects, that need no proof, but are evident to ſenſe and experience. Among theſe muſt be ranked, as claiming and deſerving a chief place at all times (but more eſpecially, when ſad and affecting

fecting inſtances of mortality call upon us to be deeply ſerious, and recollect our ſcattered thoughts) the *univerſal vanity* of the preſent life of man, and *inſtability* of all inferior enjoyments. By this our duty is moſt ſtrongly enforced; and it is the only ground on which we can frame a ſolid idea, or ſucceſsful purſuit, of happineſs. The reflections, which this ſubject affords, are not reſtrained to particular *circumſtances* and *characters*, to a peculiar *ſtation*, *complection*, or *temper*, or to any private views, but concern the whole human ſpecies. And in all caſes which are ſo obvious, and of general importance, the world does not want to be convinced of the *truth* of principles, but only to be directed how to reaſon upon them, and led into a right train of thinking. This will be fully illuſtrated, by confining ourſelves to the inſtance, which the text ſuggeſts.—The tranſitory poſſeſſion, and fading luſtre, of all the *goodlineſs* of mortal man, of all worldly felicity and honour, are points univerſally acknowledged. It would be thought madneſs to *diſpute*, and ridi-

ridiculous to attempt to *prove* them. But that they are not properly conſidered is as clear, as that the facts themſelves are certain and unqueſtionable: For if they were, their influence muſt appear viſibly in correcting the irregular ſtarts of wild and impetuous paſſion, and in the fruits of equanimity, moderation, and ſublime diſpoſitions, in fervent uninterrupted offices of piety, and the diſcipline of a ſtrict and cautious virtue. And the prophet has, therefore, repreſented God himſelf as commanding him to proclaim, not for the *information* of mankind, or the diſcovery of a new truth, but to engage their *attention* to a principle allowed in theory, but ſhamefully neglected with reſpect to its practical conſequences, tho' of everlaſting moment, that——*All fleſh* is *graſs, and all the goodlineſs thereof* is *as the flower of the field.*

By *all fleſh*, in the text, are intended the race of mankind, who are, with the ſtricteſt accuracy, characteriſed by that title, when their *animal propenſions*, and the *weakneſs* and *imbecillity* of their *exter-*

nal

nal frame are particularly deſcribed: And by *the goodlineſs thereof*, we are to underſtand *the perfections that adorn human nature*, that render it amiable, or venerable, as communicating a real grace, or dignity; together with thoſe things which are reputed to be its moſt eminent diſtinction, all its *imaginary glories and privileges.* Theſe are repreſented as liable to fade and wither, like the *verdure* of *graſs*, and *the flower of the field*, whoſe beauties no ſooner appear in their full bloom, than they begin to ſicken and decline. I ſhall give a brief ſpecimen of the reflections, that will naturally ariſe in the mind, with reſpect to the moſt noted accompliſhments and honours in both the kinds I have mentioned, the *real* and *fantaſtical*; and then conclude with a few more general remarks, adapted to the melancholy and awful ſcene of providence now in our view, pointing out the uſes that ſhould be made of it, and ſuggeſting ſome degrees at leaſt of of conſolation under it.—In no part of which propoſed diſcourſe is it my deſign to paint the *horrors* of death, or deſcribe

abaſing

abaſing and *mortifying* ſcenes, any further than it is neceſſary to reſtrain wantonneſs and levity, and inſpire true diſcretion, and laſting ſentiments of piety.

In the firſt place, then, nothing verifies ſo clearly and fully the obſervation made in the text, that *all fleſh* is *graſs, and all the goodlineſs* of it *as the flower of the field*; nothing ſhews ſo undeniably that the *emblems* are exactly juſt and pertinent, as the many inſtances we meet with of mortality in the *dawn* as it were of rational life, when nature is *ſcarce* ripened, when we think ourſelves juſt entered on the grand theatre of the world, and a departure out of it is leaſt *feared*, and moſt *lamented*.— What is now become of the preſumption, ſprightlineſs, and pride of *youth!* Where is that enterprizing ſpirit, that forward heat of reſolution, that ardor of purſuit, that vivacity and life in action, for which this age is ſo peculiarly remarkable! Where are its amuſements of vanity, its delight in gay oſtentation, its licentious pleaſures! All loſt in deep and ſolemn ſilence, and never to be revived. Let youth learn the

proper leſſon from hence, not to be over-confident, but modeſt and conſiderate, not to be *libertine*, and indulge the luxuriancies of fancy and appetite, but to act with prudence and virtue. Let the warmth of their tempers be cooled by reflection, and their high flow of animal ſpirits be reduced by a due mixture of ſedateneſs and gravity. But let them avoid, as the moſt *dangerous ſnare* of all, the indulgences of impurity and lewdneſs, which are not only *poiſon* to the ſoul, and attended with infamy and guilt; but exhauſt the ſtrength and vigor of nature, and are the direct path to an *immature* and *untimely* deſtruction.

And now I am entered upon this ſubject, which I was led to mention both by the text itſelf, and by the preſent mournful occaſion, ſuffer me to expatiate a little farther upon it for the benefit of the riſing generation, about whom our utmoſt care and ſolicitude is moſt naturally and worthily employed. Young perſons are, generally, moſt averſe to ſolemn contemplations of *death* and *judgment*: They are

apt

apt to regard them as objects of *terror*, which are unadapted to the ſprightlineſs of that particular ſtage of life, which damp its vigor, and contract the circle of its pleaſures. And as in this *light humour* of putting away far from them, what they are inclined to call, *the evil day*, they run a vaſt, and moſt *tremendous*, hazard of being cut down *like a flower* in the midſt of their licentious follies, and in a ſtate of impenitence, ſince *every man at his beſt eſtate is altogether vanity*; I would earneſtly recommend it to them to conſider, that were theſe, to which their heedleſſneſs and levity make them ſo ſtrongly reluctant, really *gloomy* and *diſconſolate* reflections, they would notwithſtanding be abſolutely *neceſſary*, becauſe the ſchemes of God's moral providence are fixed and unalterable; and the future judgment of mankind is an event never the leſs *certain*, nor ever the leſs *important*, for its not being duly and deliberately weighed.—For ſurvey thine own frame, which thou haſt peculiar and diſtinguiſhing *as a man*, and thou wilt find thyſelf

formed a *reaſonable* and *voluntary*, and conſequently a *moral* and *accountable* being; thou wilt find alſo, engraven upon thy heart, a *law* or *rule* of action, which muſt proceed from the eternal maker and ſovereign of the world. And to ſuppoſe that he takes *no notice* of the *conduct* of his creatures and ſubjects, repreſents him as having no regard to the order and harmony, nor indeed to the happineſs, of the moral creation; and is therefore quite unſuitable to his *wiſdom* and *goodneſs* in both the characters, in which he ſtands related to them, of father, and governor. And conſequently, ſince there is not, in the *preſent* ſtate, *any mark* of ſtrict and equal retribution, but exactly all that ſeeming diſorder and irregularity, ariſing from a promiſcuous communication of good and evil, which might fairly be expected in a ſtate of *trial*; we have the utmoſt poſſible reaſon to conclude that there is a *future* life, in which rewards and puniſhments will be *duly* and *unexceptionably* adminiſtered. What good end therefore can it anſwer to be inconſiderate and careleſs about it, or if, in the

the heat of our *youthful* ſpirits, we can prevail with ourſelves to banter and ridicule it as an idle enthuſiaſtick *fiction?* Will inſolence, or levity of wit, *alter* eternal reaſon, or *annul* the determinations of the ſupremely wiſe and almighty Deity? Or can it in the leaſt diminiſh the *natural* terrors of that awful day, when the fate of the whole world will be judicially decided?

What I have hitherto ſaid is upon a caſe *merely fictitious*, and *ſuppoſed* in order to enforce the argument more ſtrongly, *viz.* that the future judgment is, indeed, a *melancholy* and *gloomy* proſpect: But it is only ſo *accidentally*, or according to the character of the perſon who reflects upon it, and not *in itſelf.* For that we are moral and accountable is, in truth, the *diſtinction* and *honour* of our frame. It inſpires refined views, and leads to great and laudable actions. Whereas, if our exiſtence is to determine with the preſent life, which is *generally* conceived to be the caſe with reſpect to mere animal beings, our eſtimate of the dignity and value of human nature

ture muſt *ſink very low*, and it would be no wonder at all, if ſuch groveling apprehenſions debaſed our taſte, and we aimed at nothing higher than the indulgences of *brutal* life. Nothing can be a more enlivening and comfortable reflection to an *honeſt* mind than this, that its integrity will be tried and rewarded by unerring rectitude, wiſdom, and goodneſs. The thought does not in the leaſt interfere with the *regular*, but only with the *wild* and *hurtful*, pleaſures of youth: And it has a direct tendency to put a ſtop to thoſe criminal exceſſes, which are the ſureſt ground of *melancholy ideas* and *inward horror*.—What I have now offered is not intended to perſuade young perſons to *ſeclude* themſelves from the world, and affect a reſerved, formal, unſociable behaviour; but only, while they are engaged in the purſuit of pleaſure, or amuſed by innocent or uſeful entertainments, not to deprive themſelves of the more ſubſtantial delights of virtue and piety, not to forget that they are the *mortal* creatures and ſubjects of the eternal

nal God, and accountable to his ſupreme tribunal.

Let us now direct our view to another part of the dark ſcene of *death*, and we ſee the *great* and *honourable* ſtripped of all the proud ſpoils of their ambition, of all the ornaments and trophies of their dignity, and blended in the common ruin. Power indeed may be loſt, and temporary honours fade, by means of innumerable accidents, before the courſe of human life is compleated: But if they meet with no ſhocks of this kind, and preſerve their ſplendor and influence undiminiſhed, what an inconſiderable and *trifling ſpace* is there, before, by an inevitable neceſſity, they muſt ſuffer a total and eternal eclipſe!— From whence we learn, that all the ſeveral forms and elevations of human grandure, abſtracted from the influence which they may have, under a wiſe conduct, and animated by a refined ſpirit, to procure the good of others, are mere uſeleſs pomp, and not in the leaſt deſirable; and that *ambition* is an unnatural ferment, a diſtempered paſſion, whoſe cravings are irregu-

lar

lar and inſatiable, which can yield only an imaginary gratification, and ſerve but to render our loſs and diſgrace more conſpicuous when we are brought down from our height, and forced to ſubmit to the general lot of mankind. Nothing has a more evident tendency, to check the impatient ſallies of a *vain aſpiring* mind, than ſuch thoughts and meditations as theſe. Nothing is more fitly adapted to kill the ſeeds of *envy*, and prevent their riſing to a malignant and tormenting *habit*. For as the preſent ſcene of our exiſtence is ſo very ſoon terminated, the difference that there is between the ſeveral ſtations in it, provided that the neceſſaries and real conveniencies of life are enjoyed, is in itſelf ſo inconſiderable, as to be *below* provoking our *envy*, and utterly undeſerving of our ſolicitous purſuit. And the true greatneſs is in ſome degree attainable by all, which conſiſts in generous views and a noble benevolence of temper, in a contempt of flattery and mean compliances, and an uniform uncorrupted probity of heart and manners.

Again,

Again, in the third place, when we ſee that *wiſdom* and *virtue* themſelves, which are the chief *goodlineſs* and glory of a man, are no guard or defence againſt death, and, conſequently, that his beſt and moſt valuable enjoyments here are not to be depended upon as to their *preſent* influence and uſe; this will engage us in a *new* train of reflections, and, in ſome meaſure, of a different kind from what we have already purſued: Becauſe wiſdom and goodneſs are not mere *nominal* accompliſhments, but *real* excellencies, which confer honour on the perſon who is poſſeſſed of them, and give him a proper title and *right* to our eſteem. They are the moſt adorning qualities of angelical being, and the moſt worthy and beautiful delineations of Deity that can be expreſſed in created nature. They muſt therefore be groſsly diſparaged by being put upon the *ſame level* with arbitrary titles, worldly dignities, health, youth, or any other external and variable diſtinctions; which do not in the leaſt affect, ſo as either to *raiſe* or *depreſs* it, even *man's* natural and intrinſic worth.—Here then is a lecture of

humility addreſſed directly to our *reaſon*, to the *higher* and more *refined faculty* of human nature: We are taught not to rely on any thing that is to be found in *man*, but to repoſe our firm and ultimate confidence in God alone. Here we lament a *ſolid* and *deplorable* loſs indeed, to families, to the church of Chriſt, and to the world; a loſs that may be long *felt*, and extremely hard to be *repaired*; but which we ſhould each of us, according to our ſeveral *abilities*, and the *rank* we hold in the creation of God, in civil ſociety, and in the church, endeavour to repair, by acquiring larger degrees of knowledge and experience, by improving our virtues, by enlarging our compaſſion and benevolence of heart; thus preparing and qualifying ourſelves for greater and more extenſive uſefulneſs. And, in ſhort, we ſhould conſider all our opportunities for making a proficiency in knowledge and virtue (ſince they are in their own nature ſo abſolutely uncertain) as opportunities to be *haſtily* and diligently improved, that we may anſwer the chief purpoſe of our being here, and raiſe our ſouls to the joys of immor-

immortality: Nay, that by the eminency of our wiſdom and goodneſs we may not *barely* gain an admittance into the kingdom of heaven, but be *diſtinguiſhed*, and ſtand *high* in honour, among the inhabitants of thoſe glorious and bliſsful regions.

Thus have I applied the obſervation in the text, which indeed is no other than a plain unconteſtable appearance in the univerſal courſe of nature, to ſome of the principal *real*, or *ſuppoſed*, inſtances of perfection, goodlineſs, and honour, which mankind enjoy; and ſhewn, diſtinctly, what uſes do naturally ſpring from each. I have aimed in this part of my diſcourſe at nothing *curious*, but intended from the beginning, without art or affectation, to inſiſt only on thoſe *plain* topics or heads of reflection, which are found, by experience, to be moſt univerſally ſtriking and efficacious. The ſubject, without any ſtrain of invention or pomp of words, has *energy* and *weight* enough to recommend and enforce itſelf. And upon ſuch ſolemn occaſions, which diſpoſe the minds of the moſt licentious and gay to ſome degrees of ſobriety and recollection, it is ſufficient

to let *nature* ſpeak her *firſt* plain and lively ſentiments, to fix impreſſions of the like kind in almoſt every hearer. I therefore now proceed to make a few more *general* remarks, obviouſly ſuggeſted by the text.

And the firſt is, that it appears from what has been ſaid, that *all* mankind are placed, by the God of nature, very nearly in a ſtate of *equality*. They come *into* the world the ſame way, their infant-ſtate is equally tender and incapable of providing for itſelf, they are liable to the ſame paſſions, to the ſame decays and diſorders of the animal frame, and their exit, or departure, *out* of this world, is with the ſame diſmal formalities, and attended by the ſame *natural* agonies and terrors of death: So that in the moſt ſubſtantial points they are upon a level; and their differences of condition are either by accident, or by their own choice, or only in opinion. The ties, by which they are bound to cultivate for each other common benevolence and friendſhip, are founded on their very *conſtitution* and *original ſtate*, and conſequently indiſſoluble; and their

accidental diſtinctions ought never to break aſunder, or in the minuteſt degree to relax, the bonds of *nature*, and can therefore afford no reaſonable ground for haughtineſs, indifference, or mutual averſion.

But, ſecondly, from the views which have now been exhibited of the univerſally weak and uncertain condition of human life, we may not only *preſume*, but raiſe an argument of great probability, that there is a future ſtate of exiſtence intended and ordained for *man*. For can it enter into our thoughts, that *man*, who is endued with ſuch noble powers, and capable of ſuch high perfection, was intended, by the great creator, to be confined to this narrow and imperfect *ſcope* of action? Is it agreeable to our ideas of God's infinite goodneſs to ſuppoſe, that he was made for no *higher* purpoſe than to ſtruggle, for a ſmall ſpace, with the inconveniencies of this uncertain and vexatious world, and then *entirely* to loſe his exiſtence? Is he not, conſidered in this light, the moſt perplexed and inexplicable part of the creation? Does he appear with a dig-

nity

nity that is becoming a rational nature, formed after the reſplendent image of the Deity? Or can it be imagined, that thoſe good men, who have led a life of moſt laborioufly uſeful virtue, and who, beſides groaning under the common preſſures of mortality, have been expoſed to reproaches and perſecutions for conſcience ſake; can it, I ſay, be imagined, that they have *here*, in this *firſt ſhort dawn* of intelligent being, this ſtate of *unſtable fluctuating* happineſs, received *all* their reward? Theſe things are manifeſtly abſurd, diſparaging in the utmoſt degree to the honour and excellence of human nature, as well as injurious to the perfections of its glorious author: They therefore plainly point out to us a *futurity*, deſigned to be the *conſummation* of the rational life of man, and the ſeat and center of his happineſs.—And it is very well worth our obſerving, that both the wiſdom and goodneſs of God are eminently diſplayed, in that vanity and uncertainty are inſcribed on *every age*, on *every ſtation*, of the preſent life without exception; becauſe, by this conſtitution,

tion, what is equally the *concern* of all, *viz.* to aſpire after a more ſure and permanent felicity, is equally *inculcated* upon all. The *wiſe* man is not cooled and ſlackened in his acquiſitions of knowledge; nor the *religious* or *virtuous* man in his cloſe and intenſe purſuit of greater degrees of moral rectitude. The *rich* and *great* have no plauſible colour of an excuſe for their pride and oppreſſion, and being immerſed in indolence and luxury; nor thoſe, who are in the *flower* and *vigor* of their age, for being devoted to vanity, and utterly unmindful of God: But the leſſon of *Solomon*, in the book of *Eccleſiaſtes*, may be applied to every one without diſtinction, who is arrived to the due exerciſe of reaſon—*Hear the concluſion of the whole matter, fear God*, and *keep his commandments; for this is the whole of man:* And delay not, one moment, in an affair of ſuch unſpeakable, ſuch *infinite*, importance.

I ſhall only add, that tho' the *wiſe* man, and the *good* man, are ordained to ſhare *promiſcuouſly* the ſame fate with the more worthleſs, and undeſerving of eſteem; tho'

even

even they alſo, with all their moſt amiable and excelling qualities in their *preſent* ſtate and appearance, are as *graſs*, and *as the flower of the field*; yet true *wiſdom*, and genuine undiſſembled *goodneſs* its inſeparable companion, have a *ſeed* of immortality; and therefore muſt ſurvive the grave, to ſhine with brighter luſtre in the world above, purged from all mixtures of groſs error and imperfection, and eternally enlarging and refining. And if a perſon of this character drops, *unexpectedly*, in the prime of life, and the full ſtrength of nature (which is an event that, one would think, muſt affect, and in ſome degree *melt*, the moſt unconcerned and obdurate temper) tho' the animal body will be diſſolved, and the youthfulneſs, in which we are now apt to rejoice and pride ourſelves immoderately, be loſt for ever; yet the active ſpirit ſhall, at the reſurrection, be cloathed with an incorruptible body, of a glorious form, and endued with immortal vigor, and inſtead of retarding and obſtructing, rather made aſſiſtant to the ſoul in its *aſcent* to God the fountain of excel-

excellence and joy, and its inceſſant *progreſs* towards perfection. Which, ſurely, may well ſerve to mitigate our affliction, and reduce our grief within reaſonable and decent bounds.

When ſuch a *moving* ſtroke as this is given, as in the death of our moſt excellent and beloved friend, and your late worthy paſtor, *lament* we muſt; and there is ground, indeed, for very particular and deep lamentation. To urge the contrary would be againſt *nature*, againſt all the tenderneſſes and relentings of *humanity*. For the loſs of one ſo truly and highly valuable is ſcarce to be conceived all at once; it would therefore be utter ſtupidity, it would be hardneſs of heart, not to *feel* it.—The *world* has loſt a perſon of moſt diffuſive, flowing, uncontroulable benevolence of nature, and ardent for the univerſal good; one of the moſt clear and untainted integrity, of an open generous heart, that abhorred artifice and fraud; whoſe temper was ſerene, mild, and amiable, compaſſionate and ſympathizing, humble and condeſcending; who was a

bright example of *every* kind and friendly diſpoſition, and of *all* the ſocial virtues. —The *church* of Chriſt has loſt one zealouſly concerned for the intereſts of common Chriſtianity, a lover of peace and concord, a compoſer of unhappy differences and animoſities among Chriſtians, an enemy to cenſoriouſneſs and all the violences of party-zeal, and whoſe ſincere and fervent prayer it was, that *grace mercy and peace* might *be multiplied upon all that loved the Lord Jeſus in ſincerity*, of every *name*, and in every *communion*. — *Religion* has loſt an able defender, who adorned what he firmly *believed*, what he *loved* and *honoured*; and inforced the practice of it by his example; and the cauſe of *virtue* a warm and zealous advocate, from what he ſaw clearly, and *knew* by inward experience, of its intrinſic beauty and excellence. — *This church* has loſt an affectionate and vigilant paſtor, of ſerious piety, but unaffected and free from oſtentation; a judicious preacher, of a clear underſtanding and great compaſs of divine knowledge, who was indefatigable in his work, and

watched

watched for the ſouls of thoſe that were under his care, as one that knew he muſt *give an account*; and whoſe active *benevolent* mind was continually forming ſchemes of larger and more extended ſervices. And I perſuade myſelf, that the church in general cannot ſoon forget his many, and, in the degree in which he poſſeſſed them, *rare* and *exemplary* virtues, his obliging diſpoſition, his cautiouſneſs not to offend, his agreeable converſation, his excellent, ſolid, and inſtructive diſcourſes from the pulpit; and the *younger* part, eſpecially, will always remember his tender concern for their welfare, and eſtabliſhment in *good principles*, and give the moſt ſubſtantial proofs of their reſpect and gratitude, by the *piety* and *circumſpection* of their future conduct.—But among all the *loſſes* ſuſtained by the death of this excellent perſon, that of his *friends* is not the leaſt conſiderable; who are deprived of a moſt endearing companion, neither inclined to give, nor to take, offence; one of a ſteady affection, free from all unreaſonable jealouſies and ſuſpicions, which are

inconſiſtent with perfect friendſhip; and whoſe fidelity no temptations could corrupt. The ſketch, which I have now given of his character, is not from the information of others, but from an intimate acquaintance with his uncommon worth; in whom the *loveline ſs* of piety diſtinguiſhed itſelf to great advantage, and virtue had no *ſour* peculiarities, nó *auſtere* manners forbidding *acceſs* and diſcouraging *imitation*, but was all inviting and attractive.—As to the loſs of a director, adviſer, and ſoftener of all cares and inquietudes in more private and *domeſtic* life, tho' I am aſſured that it is inexpreſſibly great, and very oppreſſing upon ingenuous and grateful nature, yet it is too tender a topic to be minutely entered into, and amply diſplayed. I ſhall therefore only deſire thoſe who are more immediately concerned to remember, that tho' *all fleſh is graſs*, and *all the goodlineſs thereof* is *as the flower of the field*, yet, as is directly ſubjoined, *the word of the Lord endureth for ever*; and conſequently his promiſe muſt be immutable, that he will be the *pious*

widow's

widow's God, and the father, the almighty protector, of the deſtitute and helpleſs *orphan.*

But I cannot yet conclude without addreſſing myſelf, in a few words, to the members of this congregation, to whom my deceaſed friend and brother was more particularly related. And I ſhall endeavour to form my addreſs in ſuch a manner, as *he himſelf* would probably have made it, if under the apprehenſions of death he had retained his ſenſes perfect, and had an opportunity of giving them *all* his *final* advice and admonition. To the *wicked* then and *licentious*, he would have ſaid, (if any ſuch *there* are in this aſſembly) —*Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead, that Chriſt may give thee life*, retire *inſtantly* from *the path of the deſtroyer*, leſt thy ſoul be *entangled* in the ſnare of eternal death. To the *lukewarm* and *declining* chriſtian—*Remember from whence thou art fallen, and repent; be watchful, and ſtrengthen the things that remain and are ready to die; and do thy firſt works.* To the *upright* and *eſtabliſhed* chriſtian—

Go on to perfection, let thy profiting appear unto all; and let not thy *good*, thro' enthuſiaſtic adulterations and exceſſes of zeal, *be evil ſpoken of*. And to the *whole* community — *Finally, brethren, farewel, be perfect, be of one mind, live in peace, and the God of love and peace ſhall be with you. Let nothing be done in ſtrife and vain glory, but with lowlineſs of mind, in honour preferring one another.* Aim, in chuſing my *ſucceſſor*, at one who will neither wilfully *flatter* your imperfections, nor *conceal*, what he apprehends to be, your errors. Allow him to declare impartially what in his judgment is the *true* and *whole counſel of God*; nor be offended, as there is a *latitude* of opinion for honeſt minds, if his explications of ſcripture are ſometimes different from yours. But eſpecially, and above all, let the *truths*, which I have inculcated, make a juſt impreſſion upon your conſciences; let the *duties*, which I have recommended, be duly and inflexibly exemplified in your practice; that I may not be forced to be a *condemning* witneſs againſt you at the bar

of

of omniſcient juſtice, but that you may there appear with *honour*, as my *joy*, and everlaſting *crown of rejoicing*. And God grant, that we may all imitate the piety and virtues of the deceaſed, his moſt *lovely* and *engaging* virtues; that we may meet together, hereafter, in the *general* triumphant *aſſembly of the firſt-born, who are written in heaven*, and ſtand, without *confuſion*, before *God the judge of all.*

F I N I S.

BOOKS written by the ſame AUTHOR; *and printed for* J. NOON, *at the* White Hart, *in* Cheapſide; *and* A. MILLAR, *at* Buchanan's Head, *in the* Strand.

I. SERMONS on various and uſeful Subjects, in two Volumes, 8vo. Price bound 10 *s.*

II. The Uſefulneſs, Truth, and Excellency of the Chriſtian Revelation defended againſt the Objections contained in a late Book, intituled, Chriſtianity as old as the Creation, &c. The third Edition, corrected.

III. Three Letters to Dr. STEBBING, on the Subject of Hereſy. Price 2 *s.* 6 *d.*

IV. A Sermon preached at Barbican, on Sunday, Auguſt 16, 1741. On Occaſion of the Death of the late Reverend and Learned Mr. THOMAS EMLYN.